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QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Report of the Secretary-General

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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

[Original: French]

[12 October 1993]

1. The strength of any organization lies in its capacity to adapt continually to the evolution of its environment and, a contrario, the greatest risk it runs is that of remaining rigid and out of step with the realities of the times.

2. This rule certainly applies to the United Nations, which is preparing to commemorate its fiftieth anniversary in a context that is fundamentally different from that in which it was founded.

3. The world has changed profoundly since 1945, and the challenges facing it today are complex and varied.

4. The international community has more than ever need of an effective instrument in order to confront these vast challenges, and, while the United Nations is, unquestionably, the most appropriate framework, it is imperative that it adapt to the new situations through a process of restructuring and revitalization of all its organs.

5. It is gratifying to observe that, after all the efforts made to redynamize the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, consideration has now been accorded to and has even made headway on the question of the composition and the mode of operation of the Security Council, which is one of the principal organs of the United Nations. Indeed, the Council assumes the principal responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and, for that purpose, has access to the use of force.

6. In that regard, the Security Council should enjoy high moral authority through the support and confidence of all the States Members of the Organization on whose behalf it acts under Article 24 of the Charter.

7. The increase that occurred in 1963 to meet the need to take account of the increase in the membership of the Organization, which had risen from 51 founding States to 114 countries, was amply justified. Today, the admission of 70 new countries, bringing the membership to 184, justifies another increase.

8. It is, moreover, essential that the Security Council should operate amid collegiality and transparency in order to ensure all States Members of the Organization, those on behalf of which it acts and which are bound to implement its decisions and to assume the economic and political consequences thereof, access to its deliberations and decision making.

9. These reforms, which have to be inspired by the spirit of the Secretary-General's report entitled "An agenda for peace" (A/47/277-S/24111), can only enhance the prestige of the Security Council, strengthen the legitimacy of its action and guarantee the support and active participation of all States Members of the Organization in the implementation of all its decisions.

10. They should enable this important organ to act with all the necessary credibility and authority and, consequently, to strengthen its capacity to face up to its new responsibilities, of which preventive diplomacy should be a privileged modality.

11. Mauritania hopes that this important question will be the subject of a fruitful debate during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, with a view to the adoption of the measures required for 1995, the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.